

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Conservation Officer/Park Ranger Trainee

Class Code: 90320

A. Purpose:

Attends formal training programs and participates in field training to prepare for qualification as a Conservation Officer or Park Ranger.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

Conservation Officer/Park Ranger Trainees are in training to become Conservation Officers or Park Rangers and are not assigned to permanent duty stations until they successfully complete required training.

Conservation Officers manage wildlife, fisheries, water, and land resources; enforce wildlife, criminal, and water laws; and implement department programs in assigned districts.

Park Rangers are certified law enforcement officers and enforce criminal laws and park rules and regulations.

C. Functions:

(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions which may be found in positions of this class.)

1. Attends the South Dakota Law Enforcement training course to become knowledgeable of law enforcement policies, practices, and procedures. Upon completion of the course, becomes certified as a law enforcement officer in the state of South Dakota.
2. Participates in Game, Fish, and Parks Field training and evaluation program under the direct supervision of a Conservation Officer or Park Ranger field training officer to ensure full qualification is attained in the allotted time frame.
 - a. Completes a minimum of 320 hours of training in which trainee is evaluated by field training officers on a continual basis to determine competency, knowledge, and additional training requirements.
 - b. Works alone during last phase of training and is evaluated as to overall competency and ability to perform assigned tasks.
3. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

Reports to the Assistant Division Director of Operations for Wildlife, a Regional Park Supervisor for Parks and Recreation, or to the Division Director of Custer State Park for formal supervision; receives guidance and direction on a daily basis from the training coordinator and from the Conservation Officer or Park Ranger who is the field training officer.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenged to successfully complete a comprehensive and demanding training program in the programmed time. This may be difficult because of the variety and number of tasks that must be mastered. Further challenged to perform duties as if alone, while being closely monitored by a field training officer.

Problems include determining when to ask for help, and adjusting to training techniques and personalities of varying field training officers.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions are limited to assigned work, and most are referred to Field Training Officers during the training program.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily contact with the public to answer questions about department programs and functions; check permits, safety equipment, and licenses; and with department personnel to receive guidance and training.

H. Working Conditions:

Typical office environment.

I. Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- the principles and techniques of fisheries and wildlife management including the biological concepts of zoology and ecology;
- the key components of police, courts, corrections, and juvenile justice in the criminal justice processes of our local, state, and federal governments.

Ability to:

- read and comprehend technical written material and draw conclusions from available information;
- make presentations and answer questions about wildlife, hunting, fishing, parks, and related topics;
- correctly identify wildlife and fish;
- work under arduous conditions;
- communicate sufficiently to interact with a variety of individuals;
- make detailed observations;
- accurately recall and present information concisely;
- meet and maintain physical fitness standards.